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For Immediate Release: OCTOBER 15, 2004
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MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ASK IRS TO SUSPEND AUDIT OF HARTFORD RESIDENTS

Hartford, CT - In a letter to Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Mark W. Everson, U.S. Senator Joseph I. Lieberman, Senator Christopher J. Dodd, and U.S. Representative John Larson called on the Commissioner to suspend the targeted "test" of **8,500 Hartford Residents** who benefited from the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit in 2003.

Beginning in November, the IRS announced that it was targeting 8,500 low-income working families in Hartford to audit where their dependent children resided. Though, there is no specific allegation of fraud in the Hartford area, Hartford has been targeted as the only city in the nation to have one third of all "tests" (out of 25,000 conducted nationwide) aimed squarely at its working families simply because they took advantage of the EITC.

"I want to thank Senators Dodd and Lieberman as well as Congressman Larson for taking a firm stand against this unwarranted targeting of Hartford residents by the IRS. The secrecy surrounding the process for selecting Hartford families for this increased scrutiny is clearly troubling. The fact that thousands of residents are being targeted simply because they are low income and live in a certain area, sends a strong message to these taxpayers that they are being singled out for discriminatory treatment by the federal government. Thousands of families legally entitled to the EITC in Hartford are not presently taking advantage of the program. This proposed blanket audit by the IRS will drive down further the number of families claiming this tax credit."

The Senators and Congressman in their October 14 letter stated, "Until all these issues we have listed are resolved, we request and expect the IRS test will not be implemented." The issues outlined in Mayor Perez' letter to the Congressional delegation included the criteria under which Hartford was selected, **the impact of the additional audit requirements on taxpayers, the real purpose of the test and the method of implementation.**